

Figure 3 comprises a detail that illustrates how the helix-shaped drive 106 advances skewer-holders 107 along guide rail section 207. Element 301 is illustrative of the closely spaced magnets in guide rail section 207. The magnets in section 208 are spaced further apart.

Figure 4 illustrates the preferred embodiment 4A and an alternative 4B for the configuration of the skewer holder 401 and the magnets 402 within the guide rail.

Figure 5 illustrates the skewer-holder 107 and the breaking of the skewer 108 at the first of two score marks 501.

The progressive roasting and toasting machine has been described with reference to particular embodiments. Other modifications and enhancements can be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the claims that follow.

CLAIMS

1. A method of food preparation including the steps of:
placing one or more food items on a carrier;
removeably positioning said carrier on a transport mechanism;
simultaneously rotating and advancing said carrier in a linear direction;
subjecting said food item(s) to a predetermined level of heat; and,
removing said carrier from said transport mechanism after said carrier has traveled a predetermined distance.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein there are two items of food on said carrier during the preparation process.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein said carrier is a one piece member provided with a structurally weakened area.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein said food items are placed on said carrier so that said weakened area is positioned between said food items.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein there are three items of food on said carrier during the preparation process.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein said carrier is a one piece member provided with a weakened area.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein said food items are placed on said carrier so that said weakened area is positioned between two of the three food items.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein there are four or more food items placed on said carrier.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein additional carriers are separately removeably positioned on said transport mechanism at pre-determined time intervals.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein a plurality of said carriers is placed in a pre-loading station.

11 The method of claim 1 wherein said carriers are stored at a pre-determined location
after the heating process.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein one end of said carrier is held on said transport
mechanism and the other end is unsupported as it rotates and advances in said linear
direction.

13. The method of claim 1 wherein said transport mechanism utilizes magnetic force to
hold said carrier in a stable manner.

14. The method of claim 1 wherein said carriers are moved in response to movement of a
rotating mechanism.

15. A food preparation apparatus having

a top surface,

a bottom surface,

a guide rail positioned parallel to and between said top and bottom surface having a front end
and a back end,

heating means,

at least one removable food carrying means mounted on said guide rail for travel between said
front and back ends of said guide rail,

said food carrying means having a base that is mounted on said guide rail and an unsupported
end,

wherein food is placed between said base and said unsupported end and travels from said front
end to said back end of said guide rail such that it is cooked by said heating means.

16. The apparatus of claim 15 wherein said food carrying means is held on said guide rail by magnetic force.

5

17. The apparatus of claim 15 wherein there are a plurality of said food carrying means mounted on said guide rail at the same time.

10

18. A food mounting skewer having a first end and a second end and at least one weakened area located between said first end and said second end wherein there is one portion of food on said skewer between said weakened area and said first end and a second portion of food between said weakened area and said second end such that when said skewer is broken at the weakened area there results a plurality of segments each having a portion of food for easy holding and eating of said food portions.

15

20

19. The skewer of claim 18 where said skewer has two weakened areas and there is a portion of food spaced between said two weakened areas such that upon breaking said skewer at both weakened areas there results three independent segments each having a portion of food for easy holding and eating.

25

20. The skewer of claim 18 wherein said first end is pointed so as to pierce food portions and wherein said second end is blunt so as to frictionally fit into a support base.

30

21. The method of claim 2 wherein said carrier is a two piece member in which said two pieces are releasably connected to each other.

35

22. The method of claim 1 wherein said carrier can be initially positioned in one of a plurality of locations on said transport mechanism.

40

23. The method of claim 1 wherein there is a motor speed controller to vary the cooking time of said food items.

45

24. The apparatus of claim 15 wherein a grease pan is provided to catch drippings.

25. A transport system comprising

a guide rail,

a coiled drive means supported by said guide rail, and

carrier means located between adjacent coils of said drive means magnetically attached to said guide rail wherein rotation of said drive means causes said carrier means to advance in a linear direction.

26. The transport system of claim 25 wherein said carrier means is a food carrying skewer.

27. The transport system of claim 25 wherein said carrier means is two ended elongated member having one end magnetically attached to said guide rail and the other end remaining unsupported in space as it advances in said linear direction.

27. The method of claim 13 wherein said carrier is an elongated structure having two ends, said first end being attached to said transport mechanism and said second end being unsupported in space.

29. The method of claim 13 wherein said transport mechanism includes a rotatable coiled drive means for advancing said carrier.

30. The transport system of claim 25 wherein a plurality of magnets are provided on said guide rail.

31. The transport system of claim 30 wherein said magnets are spaced on said guide rail in predetermined non-linear locations.